



Coqui Frogs Invade National Parks

Found across East Hawai'i Island and in pockets across the rest of the state, coqui frogs have become a ubiquitous part of life for many people. Children and newcomers to Hawaii may not remember a time when only the crickets sang at night. That time was only about 22 years ago. For many people, plants, and other animals, evening time has been forever altered by the loud calls and big appetites of coqui frogs. As populations of this invasive amphibian reach astounding densities in the lowlands, they are venturing out into less than ideal habitats. Many of these habitats are in dryer and cooler regions than what the frogs usually prefer. These same regions contain many of Hawaii's national parks. Resource managers from all of Hawaii's national parks are aware of the encroaching pest and fear the negative impacts they will have on the ecosystems and visitor experiences in the parks. Vigilant removal projects are active in many areas statewide. Removing the frogs from an area usually involves hand capturing or spraying the foliage with a citric acid solution. For more information on coqui frogs and to listen to a sample of their calls, visit the Hawaii Invasive Species Council website: <http://www.hawaiiinvasivespecies.org/pests/coqui.html>

Known National Park Hideouts

Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park (about 190 reported and 170 removed in 2009-2010; hundreds more frogs live in subdivisions near the park boundary)

Haleakalā National Park (none reported in the park, but the frogs pose a strong potential threat due to established populations elsewhere on Maui)

Kalaupapa NHP (none reported)

Pu'uuhonua o Hōnaunau NHP (2 frogs reported and removed since 2007)

Pu'ukoholā NHS (none reported)

Kaloko-Honokōhau NHP (1 frog reported and removed; small populations near the park boundary)



The smaller and lighter colored male coqui frogs call loudly and frequently on warm nights.

HAWAII NATIONAL PARKS' LEAST WANTED



Coqui frog
(female)

a.k.a.
Eleutherodactylus coqui

Species on the loose!
The parks need your help!

Crime: Disturbing the peace

In Hawaii, these Caribbean frogs have no natural predators or competitors which creates conditions for populations to reach up to several thousand per acre. Collectively, they eat huge amounts of insects which is known to disturb the balance of native ecosystems. Moreover, the males emit a loud, high-pitched, two-note "co-kee" noise from dusk until dawn.

How to identify coqui frogs

Easily identified, this small frog is brown to grey-brown in color with a thin tan stripe down the middle of its back. It thrives in moist and thickly vegetated areas up to 3,900 feet in elevation.

Be a crime fighter

- ✓ Volunteer with a community association to control coqui frogs.
- ✓ It is illegal to keep them as pets.
- ✓ Alert a ranger if you see or hear a coqui frog in a national park.
- ✓ Don't harbor a fugitive! If you have been in an area with coqui frogs, check under your car and remove any frogs before visiting another area.

— C. Nash